

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims to be as follows.

1. (currently amended) A method for image processing, the method comprising:
  - applying a point-based threshold function to identify candidate edge chains in an image being processed;
  - determining a dynamic chain-based threshold function that is dependent on ~~at least one characteristic~~ a global characteristic of the image being processed;
  - applying the dynamic chain-based threshold function to selectively filter the candidate edge chains; and
  - removing from a set of edge chains those candidate edge chains that fail to pass the dynamic chain-based threshold function,  
wherein the global characteristic comprises a global measure of color variation that is calculated over an image.
2. (canceled)
3. (canceled)
4. (canceled)
5. (currently amended) The method of ~~claim 4~~ claim 1, wherein the global measure comprises a mean measure of the color variation.
6. (currently amended) The method of ~~claim 4~~ claim 1, wherein the global measure comprises a median measure of the color variation.
7. (currently amended) The method of ~~claim 4~~ claim 1, wherein the global measure is calculated over the candidate edge chains within the image.
8. (currently amended) The method of ~~claim 2~~ claim 1, wherein the dynamic chain-based threshold function comprises a linear function of the global characteristic.

9. (currently amended) An apparatus for image processing, the apparatus comprising:
- a candidate edge chain identifier for identifying candidate edge chains in an image being processed;
- means for determining a dynamic chain-based threshold function that is dependent on ~~at least one characteristic~~ a global characteristic of the image being processed; and
- a threshold applicator for applying the dynamic chain-based threshold function to selectively filter the candidate edge chains,
- wherein the global characteristic comprises a global measure of color variation that is calculated over an image.
10. (canceled)
11. (canceled)
12. (currently amended) The apparatus of ~~claim 11~~ claim 9, wherein the global measure comprises a mean measure of the color variation.
13. (currently amended) The apparatus of ~~claim 11~~ claim 9, wherein the global measure comprises a median measure of the color variation.
14. (currently amended) The apparatus of ~~claim 11~~ claim 9, wherein the global measure is calculated over the candidate edge chains within the image.
15. (currently amended) The apparatus of ~~claim 10~~ claim 9, wherein the dynamic chain-based threshold function comprises a linear function of the global characteristic.
16. (original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the apparatus comprises a video encoder.
17. (original) The apparatus of claim 16, wherein the video encoder is configured to operate cooperatively with a video decoder, and wherein the video decoder also comprises the edge identifier, the means for determining, and the thresher.

18. (original) The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the apparatus comprises a video decoder.
19. (currently amended) A method for processing an image, the method comprises:
- determining a dynamic chain-based threshold function that is dependent on ~~at least one global characteristic~~ a global measure of color variation of the image being processed; and
- applying the dynamic chain-based threshold function to a candidate edge chain.
20. (currently amended) A system for image processing, the system comprising:
- an encoder that includes a candidate edge chain identifier for identifying candidate edge chains in an image being processed, means for calculating a dynamic chain-based threshold function that is dependent on at least one global characteristic of the image being processed, and a threshold applicator for applying the dynamic chain-based threshold function to the candidate edge chains; and
- a decoder configured to operate in cooperation with the encoder, wherein the decoder also includes the candidate edge chain identifier, the means for calculating, and the threshold applicator.